International Information and Networking Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Region under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHCAP)
The Asia-Pacific region has been called a treasure house of intangible cultural heritage because of its diverse heritage and rich cultural environment.

What is Intangible Cultural Heritage?

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) is a cultural property that has been transmitted from generation to generation and is constantly recreated and developed.

Safeguarding ICH is to raise awareness of its value and enhance the transmission for maintaining its vitality since it is a source of cultural diversity and human creativity.
UNESCO, as a specialized agency in education, science, and culture within the United Nations system, assists its Member States in developing and implementing measures to effectively safeguard cultural heritage. Among those ICH activities, adopting the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage is the most comprehensive international measure bringing up a paradigm shift for cultural heritage. UNESCO is also supporting safeguarding work of ICH in the region through various activities of Category 2 Centres.

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ICHAP was approved as a UNESCO Category 2 Centre at the 35th UNESCO General Conference in 2009 for safeguarding ICH in the Asia-Pacific region, and the Centre was officially established on 1 July 2011.

Based on the spirit of UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression (2005), ICHAP will attempt to contribute to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in the Asia-Pacific region focusing on two main functions, information and networking.
The following objectives are to be achieved, in order to contribute to the promotion of cultural diversity and sustainable development.

- **Objectives**
  - Promote the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and contribute to implementing it in the Asia-Pacific region
  - Increase the participation of communities, groups, and individuals in ICH safeguarding and raise regional awareness about ICH
  - Foster regional and international cooperation for ICH safeguarding
  - Enhance regional capacity for ICH safeguarding by sharing and disseminating information

- **History**
  - **2009. 10.**
    Approval to Establish the Centre under the Auspices of UNESCO at the 35th UNESCO General Conference
  - **2010. 06.**
    The Government of the Republic of Korea and UNESCO Signed the Agreement Establishing the Centre
  - **2011. 07.**
    Official Establishment of ICHCAP
  - **2011. 03.**
    Amendment of the Cultural Properties Protection Law to Establish the UNESCO Category 2 Centre
  - **2012. 01.**
    Dr. Samuel Lee appointed as the first Director-General of ICHCAP
  - **2014. 05.**
    Located in the National Intangible Heritage Center of Korea (Jeonju)
  - **2008. 04.**
    Submitted Proposal to Establish the Centre to the 179th Session of the UNESCO Executive Board
  - **2006. 09.**
    Launched the Establishment Initiative for the Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre for the Asia-Pacific (EiICHAP)
  - **2005. 10.**
    Official proposal to establish the Centre was made at the 33rd UNESCO General Conference by the Government of Korea to Establish the Centre
Functions

To achieve its objectives, ICHCAP undertakes projects within its overall functions focusing on information and networking.

Information
means overall data management systems such as collecting data, digitizing archival materials, and supporting the development of metadata standards as well as disseminating informational and promotional materials.

Networking
contains online and offline networks among concerned communities, NGOs, governments, and individuals to reinforce the transmission and dissemination of ICH.
Information Building and Sharing

01 Collecting and Archiving
ICH Information in the Asia-Pacific Region

To understand the current status of ICH safeguarding efforts in the Asia-Pacific region, the Centre is collecting basic information on ICH safeguarding systems and policies, ICH inventories, relevant organizations, pending issues, and urgent ICH safeguarding needs of each country in the region.

- Collecting basic information related to ICH safeguarding efforts in the Asia-Pacific region
- Archiving the collected information from 2009 to 2014 and providing the information online

02 Supporting ICH Documentation and Producing an ICH Video Documentation

ICHAP is supporting ICH documentation to recognize the main elements that constitute ICH and help ICH transmission, and also producing videos and guidebooks and encouraging collaborative works among the concerned community and documentation experts.

03 Restoring and Digitizing ICH-Related Materials

The Centre has identified the current status and condition of data and ICH information-related materials in the Asia-Pacific region, and is carrying out projects to secure rare materials by restoring and digitizing timeworn and damaged analogue data.

- Selecting ICH data in need of digitization
- Holding a digitization workshop
- Publishing promotional material using the restored data

04 Constructing ICH Database and Archives

To enhance the management functions of an ICH database, the Centre is constructing an information system platform for ICH, through archive work.

- Constructing ICH portal site for enhanced usability
- Enhancing integrated ICH databases managing functions

By collecting, producing, and disseminating information, ICHAP aims to increase the Asia-Pacific region’s capacity for safeguarding ICH. To this end, the Centre is carrying out various surveys and researches to build an ICH information system in the Asia-Pacific region.
Strengthening Cooperative Networks for ICH

ICHAP establishes networks among UNESCO, UNESCO Category 2 Centre, government organizations, and Member States in the Asia-Pacific region to enhance ICH safeguarding:

- Strengthening effective collaboration mechanisms and communication with UNESCO, C2 Centres, and the Korean government
- Developing Centre’s mid- and long-term cooperation strategies

ICHAP strengthens sub-regional cooperation through cooperative projects regarding ICH safeguarding in the Asia-Pacific region:

- Establishing the foundation for regional cooperation for ICH Safeguarding in Northeast Asia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific

The ICH expert networking programs strengthen cooperation among participants, allowing them to build networks by sharing ICH information and experiences.

- Discussing main issues such as sustainable development, local community, and construction of information systems among policymakers and also exchanging the experiences, information, and knowledge of ICH experts of the region

We are finding practical ways to contribute to enhancing the capacity and ability of ICH NGO’s through information sharing and network building.

- Supporting ICH NGO Forum
- Holding ICH NGO Conference
Promoting ICH and Raising Its Visibility

To strengthen ICH visibility and raise public awareness, ICHCAP develops ICH contents, publishes multimedia materials, and carries out projects supporting public events, such as performances, exhibitions, and hands on learning sessions on ICH.

01
Publication of Newsletter and ICH Book
ICHAP publishes quarterly newsletters to report on Asia-Pacific ICH and safeguarding issues as well as to publicize the Centre’s activities.
- Publishing and distributing ICH Courier
- Publishing UNESCO ICH brochures in Korean
- Publishing UNESCO ICH leaflets in Korean
- Publishing UNESCO ICH children books in Korean

02
Public Events on ICH
ICHAP hosts traveling photo exhibitions on ICH inscribed on UNESCO Lists and supports ICH communities to hold public events.
- Hosting Photo Exhibitions of ICH in Asia and the Pacific
- Supporting ICH performance

03
Developing and Distributing ICH-Related Digital Contents
In collaboration with organizations in Asia and the Pacific, ICHAP develops digital ICH contents and publishes multimedia materials to distribute to international experts and organizations.
- Production of the Uzbekistan ICH CD/DVD Set.
- Production of the ICH animation videos for Children: Magic Tour of World’s ICH
Organization and Members of Governing Board

We work towards enhancing cultural diversity and promoting sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region through various activities for safeguarding ICH.

ICHCAP is guided and supervised by a Governing Board composed of:

- the Administrator of Cultural Heritage Administration or his/her appointed representative, who shall be the ex-officio Chairperson of the Governing Board;
- two representatives of the Government of the Republic of Korea;
- up to five representatives of the Member States of UNESCO making a substantial contribution to the Centre and the ICH field;
- a representative of the Director-General of UNESCO;
- up to two representatives of the associated and cooperative organizations of the Republic of Korea;
- up to two representatives of any other intergovernmental organizations or non-governmental organizations, which can be accorded a seat by the decision of the Governing Board;
- and the Director-General of the Centre.
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